



Forest Heights Police Department Policy and Procedures Manual

Subject:	Personal Conduct and Responsibilities			
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A. Purpose

To establish Forest Heights Police Department (FHPD) policies regarding an officer making false statements, use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco, personal financial responsibilities, and courtesy.

B. False Statements

A FHPD officer who willfully makes a false statement or report, either written or verbal to the FHPD Chief, a supervisor, acting supervisor or any officer of the agency that is assigned, or any law enforcement agency that may be assigned, by the Chief to conduct an internal affairs investigation, is subject to dismissal. This will also apply to any report, radio message or other communication that an officer makes during the normal course of police business.

C. Alcohol Use

1. Officers will not drink any alcoholic beverage while on-duty. Officers in plain clothes, and with the prior approval of the supervisor, may drink limited quantities while on-duty when necessary to accomplish the police mission.
2. Officers will not drink any alcoholic beverage, even if off-duty, while wearing all or part of the FHPD uniform.
3. Officers will not appear for regular duty, or be on regular duty while under the influence of intoxicants to any degree whatsoever, or with an odor of intoxicants on their breath.
4. In the event of an emergency recall, each officer must determine fitness for duty if alcohol has been consumed. A supervisor will be consulted and asked to confirm or deny, as appropriate, the officer's judgment in the matter. No adverse actions will be taken if, in an emergency recall, the officer believes himself to be incapacitated for duty, says so, or is told so by a supervisor, before going on-duty.
5. Officers will not carry a firearm when off-duty in a situation the officer deems socially inappropriate, particularly where the officer consumes alcoholic beverages.

D. Drug Use

1. Officers will not use any narcotic, stimulating or dangerous drug while on-duty or off-duty unless prescribed by a physician. The supervisor will file the notice in the officer's medical personnel file.
2. Officers using any prescribed drug or narcotic or any potent medicines that could possibly induce impairment of their performance will provide written notice to their supervisor as to what medication the officer is taking and the dates the medication will be taken.
3. The supervisor will file the notice in the officer's medical personnel file.

E. Tobacco Use

Officers will not use tobacco while: in formation, engaged in traffic control, in contact with the public, and transporting prisoners, or other areas deemed inappropriate or prohibited by law or ordinance.

F. Financial Responsibility

1. All FHPD officers are expected to pay their debts.
2. Background

Inexcusable failure to pay debts places the employee in a position of diminished respect in the community and could detract from his effectiveness as a law enforcement officer. Moreover, such failure could reflect adversely on the FHPD as a whole. Thus, affecting the overall discipline, morale, and effectiveness of the FHPD as a unit. It is not the intention of the FHPD to operate as a collection agency, but officers should realize the failure to pay just debts impacts on the FHPD.

3. Procedures

- a. Upon it being brought to the attention of the Chief that a FHPD officer is seriously indebted to any numbers of creditors, the Chief will call to the officer's attention his neglect in payment of an obligation.
- b. The officer will be counseled on the importance of financial responsibility to himself and to the force as a whole.
- c. The officer will also be warned that continued failure to pay ones debts will result in disciplinary action, including removal from the force.
- d. The officer will be expected to take the necessary steps to adjust to the complaint(s) in a satisfactory manner.
- e. If after this warning, the officer's financial irresponsibility persists, the officer will be given notice to appear before the Hearing Board to determine what action will be taken.
- f. The hearing will be conducted in conformance with the "Law Enforcement Officer's Bill of Rights", Article 27, §§ 727-734 inclusive of the Annotated State Code of Maryland as amended.
- g. It will not be the hearing board's duty to determine the validity or amount of the indebtedness on the officer, but rather its effect on the effectiveness and morale of the FHPD. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- h. Any decision, order, or action taken as a result of the hearing will be in writing and will consist of a concise statement upon each issue in the case.
- i. If a finding of guilt is made, the hearing board shall reconvene the hearing, receive evidence, and consider the officer's past job performance and other relevant information as factors before making its recommendations to the Chief.
- j. A copy of the decision or order and accompanying findings and conclusions, along with written recommendations for action shall be delivered or mailed promptly to the officer or to the officer's attorney or representative of record, as well as to the Chief. The person who may take any disciplinary action following the hearing in which there is a finding of guilt will consider the officers past job performance as a factor before imposing any penalty.

G. Courtesy

1. FHPD Officers will be courteous and respectful to other officers, superiors, associates and elected or appointed officials.
2. Officers will be civil and orderly and will avoid the use of profane or abusive language towards other officers and will not use such language in the presence of civilian employees of the Town of Forest Heights.
3. Officers will control their tempers, and exercise discretion in the performance of their duties.